

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

June 12, 2002

The Honorable Ann M. Veneman
Secretary, Department of Agriculture
14th Street and Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250

Dear Madame Secretary:

We write to urge your consideration of granting federal emergency assistance to qualifying ranchers and farmers in the state of Utah. Extreme weather, Mormon Crickets, and drought have decimated crops, rangelands, and fruit trees in the state.

The state of Utah is set to experience another year of record drought. This not only exacerbates extreme growing conditions experienced by producers, it compounds them. In addition to the drought, during the month of May, high winds, hail and freezing temperatures have damaged a vast majority of the state's crops. Any remaining crops are likely to be consumed by the largest infestation (3.3 million acres), on record, of Mormon Crickets and grasshoppers. They are poised to destroy rangeland and crops in at least five Utah counties with an estimated loss of more than \$25 million. Additionally, on May 8, 2002, extreme temperatures severely damaged nearly 100 percent of the state's fruit crop. As a result of this, most of Utah's fruit growers face staggering debt with no income. Unfortunately, for them, it will be another 15 months before the next possible revenue-producing harvest.

The current conditions in Utah far exceed any benefits afforded by any federal disaster declaration. Therefore, we respectfully request that emergency funds be made available to qualifying farmers and ranchers to help offset the effects of these accumulating natural disasters, as soon as feasible and appropriate.


We thank you in advance for your timely and favorable response to this request.

Sincerely yours,

Orrin G. Hatch
United States Senator



Robert F. Bennett
United States Senator



James V. Hansen
Member of Congress



Jim Matheson
Member of Congress



Chris Cannon
Member of Congress